

Former Housing Site Becomes the WHA's Southbridge Solar Park

New 1.15 megawatt solar farm will save WHA \$1.2 million and provide clean, renewable energy to housing authority residents

WILMINGTON, Del. – The Wilmington Housing Authority (WHA), joined by Mayor Mike Purzycki, Governor John Carney and other local and state officials, today officially dedicated its new Southbridge Solar Park at 900 South Claymont Street. The 1.15 megawatt solar installation will save the housing authority money and provide clean, renewable solar-generated electricity to WHA residents. The solar array – developed, financed and constructed by New York-based Ecogy Energy– is currently the largest, privately-financed, public housing solar project in the United States.

Located at the site of the former 180-unit WHA Southbridge Extension, the solar farm is estimated to produce 40 million kilowatt hours of electricity over the lifetime of the project. The clean energy produced by this solar project is equivalent to the polluting CO2 emissions from more than 69,000 barrels of oil or nearly 33,000,000 pounds of coal burned. In addition to managing the construction of the solar park, Ecogy Energy will monitor and maintain the facility.

“We’re honored to have been able to authorize this important energy-saving program,” said **Karen Spellman, Interim Executive Director of the Wilmington Housing Authority**. “Working with Ecogy and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

(HUD), we have been able to turn an unused lot into a radiant 'sun-garden' that will save the housing authority \$1.2 million over the life of the energy contract. In turn, we can focus those savings on the needed maintenance of our existing housing stock."

The savings to the WHA will come from virtual net energy metering, through which the WHA will receive credit for any additional energy being produced to supply multiple WHA-owned properties. The WHA houses ten percent of Wilmington's population (or approximately 7,000 residents) in 4,000 multiple and single housing units via the Low-Income Public Housing (LIPH) and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) programs throughout the city.

"We're happy to help celebrate this innovative project, which will create jobs, build on our efforts to promote sustainability, and reduce emissions," said **Governor John Carney**. "Thank you to the Wilmington Housing Authority and Ecogy Energy for their leadership in partnering on this important work."

"I applaud WHA and Ecogy Energy for their commitment to this innovative project," said **Mayor Purzycki**. "This project has leveraged private capital to create local jobs, contribute to state and local sustainability efforts, and assist the largest direct provider of affordable housing in Delaware in saving money on energy costs."



“As a company, we are invested in helping bridge the gap of inequality that exists in owning and using solar energy,” said **Ken Becker, Partner at Ecogy Energy**. “The Wilmington Housing Authority has stepped into a national leadership

position with this project, and will be using the economic benefits of the project to improve housing for our lowest income population.”

The Southbridge Solar Park project is currently a contender for the U.S. Department of Energy’s SunShot Prize as part of the Solar in Your Community Challenge, a \$5 million contest that supports innovative and replicable community-based solar business models and programs that will bring solar to underserved communities. The final prize announcement will be made in January 2019.

Also participating in today’s event were State Senator Harris McDowell, City Council President Hanifa Shabazz, 4th District City Council Representative Michelle Harlee, New Castle County Executive Matt Meyer, Chairman of WHA Board of Commissioners Steve Martin, Maria L. Bynum of the HUD Wilmington Field Office, and Marie Reed of the Southbridge Civic Association.

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